Fall in Prices of Cotton

521. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that prices of cotton have fallen from the last year's Rs. 1500 to Rs. 850/- per quintal; if so the reasons therefor;

(b) what steps Government have taken/propose to take to enable the cotton growers to get remunerative prices;

(c) whether Government propose to boost its price by exporting the cotton;

(d) whether Government propose to purchase the cotton at higher price from the farmers; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a): During the Cotton year 1992-93 the prices of cotton have shown a declining trend as compared to 1991-92 due to comfortable stock position of cotton and prospects of a recrd production in 1992-93 season.

(b) The Government have enhanced the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of the two basic varieties of cotton viz. F.414/H-777 and H.7. The MSP of F. 414/H-777 variety has been raised from Rs. 695 per quintal in 1991-92 to Rs. 800 per quintal in 1992.93 and that of H-A variety from Rs. 840 per quintal in 1991-92 to Rs. 950 per quintal in 1992-93. The Minimum Support Prices of the other varieties of cotton have also been enhanced to enable the cotton growers to get remunerative prices.

(c) To enable the cotton growers to get better prices for their produce the Government have already released a quota of 14.995 lakh bales of cotton for exports during the current cotton season.

(d) and (e): The Government have directed the Cotton Corporation of India to intensify purchases in various States to help the farmers to get a reasonable price for their produce.

Fall in Prices of Agricultural Products

522. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of various agricultural produce, such as basmati superfine and toria/sarson have sharply fallen;

(b) if so, the details therof and the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps Government have taken/propose to take to enable farmer's to get remunerative prices of their agricultural produce; and

(d) whether Government propose to establish a long range export policy for the welfare of farmers so that the farmers get better prices of their agricultural produce?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b): The prices of various agricultural commodities have exhibited a declining trend for the last 4-5 months The easy trend in the prices of agricultural commodities may be ascribed to better availability due to a good Kharif Crop and expectations of a bright Rabi harvest.

(c) The procurement under price support is made by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) in close collaboration with State Governments and their State level procuring agencies. A large number of purchase centres/ Mandis are being operated by the FCI and State procuring agencies.

(d) The Government have announced Export-Import Policy valid for 5 years from April, 1992 to March, 1977 and liberalised the policy for export of number of agricultural products. such as oilseeds vegetable oils, pulses, etc. are allowed for export against licences. The export of fruits, vegetables, spices, floricultural products etc. are freely allowed